

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. – 2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[2]] 5, further comprising sending a notification to the second terminal of the desired messaging session if the second terminal has an established link with the second community server.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, further comprising receiving an indication from the second terminal of whether the desired messaging session has been accepted.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 2, further comprising~~ A method of communicating in a network having a plurality of communities each including a server, the method comprising:

receiving, from the server in a first community associated with a first service provider, a request indicating desired real-time, text-based messaging from a first terminal coupled to the first community server to a second terminal coupled to the server in a second community associated with a second, different service provider;

processing the request, by the server in the second community, to establish a real-time, text-based messaging session between the first and second terminals through the first and second community servers;

determining if the second terminal has an established link with the second community server; and

sending a message to a predetermined communications device other than the second terminal if the second terminal does not have an established ~~connection~~ link with the second community server.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5, wherein sending the ~~messages~~ message to the predetermined communications device includes sending to a communications device including at least one of a telephone, a pager, and an electronic mail receiver.

1           7.       (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 2, further comprising~~ A method of  
2 communicating in a network having a plurality of communities each including a server, the  
3 method comprising:

4                 receiving, from the server in a first community associated with a first service  
5 provider, a request indicating desired real-time, text-based messaging from a first terminal  
6 coupled to the first community server to a second terminal coupled to the server in a second  
7 community associated with a second, different service provider;

8                 processing the request, by the server in the second community, to establish a real-  
9 time, text-based messaging session between the first and second terminals through the first and  
10 second community servers;

11                determining if the second terminal has an established link with the second  
12 community server; and

13                performing a reverse log on to the second terminal if the second terminal does not  
14 have an established link with the second community server.

1           8.       (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 7, further comprising  
2 establishing a chat session between the first and second terminals.

1           9. – 18. (Cancelled)

1           19.     (Currently Amended) A server for use in a communications system having a  
2 plurality of communities coupled by a network, each community associated with a different  
3 service provider, the server being associated with a first one of the communities and comprising:

4                 an interface unit adapted to receive a contact request over the network from an  
5 entity associated with another community, the entity not logged on to the server, the contact  
6 request indicating a request to establish a text-based messaging session with a destination  
7 terminal linked to the server; and

8                 a controller adapted to send a notification to the destination terminal of the  
9 contact request and to receive an indication from the destination terminal of acceptance of the  
10 contact request if the destination terminal is logged on,

11                   the controller to send a message to an alternative communications device other  
12                   than the destination terminal if the destination terminal is not logged on.

1           20.   (Currently Amended) An article including one or more machine-readable storage  
2   media containing instructions for establishing a text-based messaging session between  
3   subscribers in a plurality of communities, each community associated with a different service  
4   provider, the instructions when executed causing a system in a first community associated with a  
5   first service provider to:

6                   receive a request from a subscriber in a second community associated with a  
7   second service provider, the request indicating a desired text-based messaging session with a  
8   subscriber in the first community;

9                   determine if the subscriber in the first community is logged on to the first service  
10                  provider;

11                  notify the subscriber in the first community of the request if the subscriber in the  
12                  first community is logged on;

13                  determine if the subscriber in the first community has accepted the request;

14                  [[and]]

15                  establish the text-based messaging session between the subscribers if the  
16   subscriber in the first community accepted; and

17                  send a message to an alternative destination in response to determining that the  
18                  subscriber in the first community is not logged on.

1           21.   (Original) The article of claim 20, wherein the one or more storage media contain  
2   instructions that when executed cause the system to further send signaling to establish the text-  
3   based messaging session.

1           22.   (Original) The article of claim 20, wherein the text-based messaging session  
2   includes a chat session.

1           23.   (Original) The article of claim 20, wherein the one or more storage media contain  
2   instructions that when executed cause the system to create a controller object adapted to control  
3   the text-based messaging session.

1           24.   (Original) The article of claim 20, wherein the one or more storage media contain  
2 instructions that when executed cause the system to:  
3               receive a request from a subscriber in a third community associated with a third  
4 service provider for a text-based messaging session; and  
5               establish the text-based messaging session among the subscribers in the first,  
6 second, and third communities.

1           25. – 26. (Cancelled)

1           27.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 7, wherein receiving the request  
2 comprises receiving a request indicating a desired interactive, text-based chat session.

1           28.   (Currently Amended) The server of claim [[19]] 36, wherein the text-based  
2 messaging session comprises an interactive, text-based chat session.

1           29.   (Currently Amended) ~~The server of claim 19,~~ A server for use in a  
2 communications system having a plurality of communities coupled by a network, each  
3 community associated with a different service provider, the server being associated with a first  
4 one of the communities and comprising:  
5               an interface unit adapted to receive a contact request over the network from an  
6 entity associated with another community, the entity not logged on to the server, the contact  
7 request indicating a request to establish a text-based messaging session with a destination  
8 terminal linked to the server; and  
9               a controller adapted to send a notification to the destination terminal of the  
10 contact request and to receive an indication from the destination terminal of acceptance of the  
11 contact request;  
12               wherein the controller is adapted to further send messaging to perform a reverse  
13 log-on procedure with the destination terminal.

1           30.   (Previously Presented) The article of claim 20, wherein the instructions when  
2 executed cause the system to establish the text-based messaging session by establishing an  
3 interactive, text-based chat session.

1           31.     (Cancelled)

1           32.     (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 7, further comprising providing  
2 a web page for display at the first terminal, wherein receiving the request comprises receiving a  
3 message generated in response to a selection made in the web page.

1           33.     (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 7, further comprising:  
2                 providing a session object in the second community server,  
3                 wherein receiving the request comprises receiving a request at the session object  
4 in the second community server from another session object in the first community server; and  
5                 the session object in the second community server exchanging messaging with the  
6 first community server to establish the real-time, text-based messaging session.

1           34.     (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 1, further comprising:~~ A method of  
2 communicating in a network having a plurality of communities each including a server, the  
3 method comprising:  
4                 receiving, from the server in a first community associated with a first service  
5 provider, a request indicating desired real-time, text-based messaging from a first terminal  
6 coupled to the first community server to a second terminal coupled to the server in a second  
7 community associated with a second, different service provider;  
8                 processing the request, by the server in the second community, to establish a real-  
9 time, text-based messaging session between the first and second terminals through the first and  
10 second community servers;  
11                 providing a response, from the second community server, to the first terminal to  
12 present a web page in a web browser on the first terminal; and  
13                 receiving a text message of the real-time, text-based messaging session originated  
14 from the web browser on the first terminal.

1           35.     (Currently Amended) The server of claim [[19]] 29, wherein the interface unit is  
2 adapted to receive the contact request from a second server in the other community.

1           36.     (Currently Amended) ~~The server of claim 19,~~ A server for use in a  
2     communications system having a plurality of communities coupled by a network, each  
3     community associated with a different service provider, the server being associated with a first  
4     one of the communities and comprising:

5                 an interface unit adapted to receive a contact request over the network from an  
6     entity associated with another community, the entity not logged on to the server, the contact  
7     request indicating a request to establish a text-based messaging session with a destination  
8     terminal linked to the server; and

9                 a controller adapted to send a notification to the destination terminal of the  
10    contact request and to receive an indication from the destination terminal of acceptance of the  
11    contact request;

12                wherein the controller is adapted to communicate a web page for display on the  
13    entity,

14                the contact request comprising a message generated in response to user selection  
15    made in the web page at the entity.

1           37.     (Currently Amended) The server of claim [[19]] 36, wherein the controller  
2     comprises a session object,

3                 the session object adapted to exchange messaging with another session object in a  
4     second server in the other community to establish the text-based messaging session.

1           38.     (Currently Amended) The server of claim [[19]] 36, wherein the controller is  
2     adapted to communicate a response to the contact request to present a web page in a web  
3     browser at the entity,

4                 the interface unit adapted to further receive text messaging from the web browser  
5     at the entity during the text-based message session.

1           39.     (Previously Presented) The article of claim 20, wherein the instructions when  
2     executed cause the system to receive the request at a first server in the system from a second  
3     server in the second community.

1           40.     Currently Amended) ~~The article of claim 39, wherein the instructions when~~  
2 ~~executed cause the system to~~ An article including one or more machine-readable storage media  
3 containing instructions for establishing a text-based messaging session between subscribers in a  
4 plurality of communities, each community associated with a different service provider, the  
5 instructions when executed causing a system in a first community associated with a first service  
6 provider to:

7                     receive a request from a subscriber in a second community associated with a  
8 second service provider, the request indicating a desired text-based messaging session with a  
9 subscriber in the first community;

10                    notify the subscriber in the first community of the request;

11                    determine if the subscriber in the first community has accepted the request;

12                    establish the text-based messaging session between the subscribers if the  
13 subscriber in the first community accepted,

14                    wherein the request is received at a first server in the system from a second server  
15 in the second community; and

16                    provide a web page for display at a subscriber terminal in the second community,  
17                    wherein the request received at the first server comprises messaging generated in  
18 response to selection made in the web page displayed at the subscriber terminal in the second  
19 community.

1           41.     (Previously Presented) The article of claim 39, wherein the instructions when  
2 executed cause the system to:

3                     provide a session object in the system; and

4                     cause the session object to exchange messaging with the second server to  
5 establish the text-based messaging session.

1           42.     (Currently Amended) The article of claim ~~[[20]]~~ 40, wherein the instructions  
2 when executed cause the system to further:

3                     communicate, in response to the request, a web page for display in a web browser  
4 at a subscriber terminal in the second community; and

5                     receive messaging from the web browser during the text-based messaging session.